



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE, 2019**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1541, H.D. 1, RELATING TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

DATE: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 **TIME:** 3:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

TESTIFIER(S): Clare E. Connors, Attorney General, or
Amy Murakami, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to create within the University of Hawai'i, a Hawai'i gun violence prevention center (Center), which would conduct and administer, through a special fund consisting of state appropriations and private donations, interdisciplinary research and analysis of gun-related violence, gun violence prevention, and the effectiveness of existing laws and policies.

The Department supports the intent of this bill and the placement of the Center within the University of Hawai'i, which has the expertise and experience to make the Center a success. The Department offers its assistance where possible. For example, we may be able to provide research data on the use of guns in violent crimes in Hawai'i. And, the Department is involved with programs that could help to address issues related to both violent crime and gun violence including: (1) Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative; (2) Domestic Violence Fatality Review; (3) Career Criminal Prosecution Program; and (4) Address Confidentiality Program.

The Department appreciates this opportunity to provide testimony in support.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Judiciary Committee
Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

By

Denise Eby Konan, PhD
Dean, College of Social Sciences

And

Michael Bruno, PhD
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1541 HD1 – RELATING TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Chair Lee, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify **in support** of HB 1541 HD1 provided it does not adversely affect UH priorities as set in our budget request. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) supports this bill to create a Hawai'i gun violence prevention center to conduct and administer research on gun violence and policies. The center would analyze and develop strategies to prevent gun violence in Hawai'i and administer grant-making for community gun violence prevention programs.

UHM acknowledges that federal funding for research on gun violence has ended since passage of the Dickey Amendment in 1996 and state and local institutions need to conduct their own essential research, drawing upon the resources of other research and policy centers across the US, while identifying and developing their own research and policy initiatives.

The University recognizes that other universities across the nation are home to similar state-funded research centers, supporting their own communities with interdisciplinary research and analysis of gun-related violence, gun violence prevention, and the effectiveness of existing laws and policies. The State of Hawai'i and its citizens would greatly benefit from this center and UHM - in particular its College of Social Sciences (CSS) - has the means and expertise for this type of multidisciplinary research and grant administration.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa has an impressive history of funded research on violence prevention, as well as formal and informal collaborations and partnerships with state and county governments and the non-profit sector. From 2000-2011, the Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center (APIYVPC), funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), conducted community-based research and implemented school-based violence prevention programming on Oahu. The APIYVPC was housed in the UHM Department of Psychiatry and consisted of multidisciplinary faculty researchers and students, including several from the CSS.

In 2004, the Social Science Research Institute (SSRI) within the CSS, under contract with the Department of Health's EMS and Injury Prevention System Branch, wrote "Ending Violence: A 2004 Status Report on Violence Prevention in Hawai'i". This required extensive data collection and an action-planning process with groups working on preventing all types of violence. SSRI also conducted the evaluation of the suicide prevention gatekeeper training. Most notably, for 15 years, the University conducted gang and delinquency research and evaluation under contract with the Hawai'i Attorney General and the Office of Youth Services. UHM's working relationships with agencies in the Youth Gang Response System produced long-lasting affiliations aimed at reducing violence in Hawai'i and resulted in many valuable reports used by government and non-profit agencies. In 1990, SSRI published "Gun Control: A Youth Issue," a report that aided the legislature and state departments.

The University's track record and its connection to state, city, and community agencies, and coalitions working on violence prevention is a foundation for working together through the establishment of the violence prevention research center. As in the past, UHM would develop strong working relationships with Hawai'i's departments such as the Attorney General, Health, and Human Services and the county law enforcement agencies. CSS has a number of scholars with experience in the field of violence prevention and is currently in planning to build a larger capacity for research in the fields of crime, violence and the law.

Therefore, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa supports the purpose of this bill to prevent gun violence and save lives by establishing the Hawai'i gun violence prevention center. We welcome further discussions on the development of a center in association with the William S. Richardson School of Law and the College of Social Sciences.

Thank you for your consideration.



Institute for Rational and Evidence-based Legislation

P. O. Box 41

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February 12, 2019

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Re: HB1541

To be heard: Wednesday, February 13, 2019

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members,

Please vote NO on HB1541.

Not only is some entity designated as the “Hawaii Gun Violence Prevention Center” superfluous and unnecessary, the 10 authors of this bill engage in either disingenuous misleading statements of fact and statistics, or to put it more accurately, outright lies and deceptions that are merely parroting the deceptive talking points of the national anti-civil-rights organizations (“Giffords”, Bloomberg-funded Anytown for Gun Safety and Moms Demand Action, the Brady Center, Violence Policy Center, etc.) dedicated to further infringing the civil rights of law-abiding citizens to defend themselves from criminal predation via the use of firearms.

Does that sound harsh? It's not, it's actually being kind, as what the authors have done is really a case of fraud. While an entire book would be required to detail each and every lie and fraudulent claim that appears in the rationale/justification prelude to the bill language itself, I will have to settle here for merely outlining just a few of the attempts to deceive.

First, and not without great significance, is the fact that “gun violence” is nothing more than a propaganda term, designed to deceive the uninformed. All of the claimed “statistics” the authors of this bill list as justifications are fabricated upon deliberate statistical manipulations, including confounding and conflating highly dissimilar events.

Let me give you an example of “gun violence” and how it has been “computed” by the authors of this bill to supposedly justify taxpayers of Hawaii spending money to generate “evidence” to further curtail their rights. Suppose a father in one part of his home, armed with a handgun in a holster, hears what he considers an unusual noise coming from another distant part of the house. He goes to investigate and determines that the sound is coming from the bedroom of his 10 and 7-year-old daughters. He opens the closed door of the room to see his 10-year-old daughter bound, gagged, raped, and murdered by knife wounds, while his 7-year-old daughter, also bound and gagged lies next to her on the bed, with a large man standing over her, still holding a knife. The father yells “Stop!”, at which point the man turns toward the 7-year-old girl and brings the knife up as if to attack her, the father then fires the gun at the rapist murderer and stops the attack, killing him and saving his second daughter.

Now, is that “gun violence” that needs “preventing” according to the authors of this bill? They seem to think so. It certainly is violence that included the use of a firearm. Do we want to prevent such an instance of “gun violence”? We don't really know for sure how the authors of the bill view this because the justifications they give and sources they cite for such definitions are not completely clear. But it is likely that such an event, AND ALL INSTANCES OF SELF DEFENSE WITH FIREARMS, are counted by them to be instances of “gun violence”, which is really simply a pejorative term that identifies all firearm use as “violence” that needs to be “prevented”, thus there are no qualifications nor exceptions for justified homicide nor any other instance of justifiable self-defense. Why would anyone want to “prevent” such “gun violence” that saves lives (as happens millions of time per year as reported by the CDC which the authors of this bill falsely claim have been prohibited from doing precisely the research they have done)? What could that motive possibly be? Why wouldn't they use more accurate terms such as “Hawaii Center to Prevent Criminal Uses of Firearms and Suicide Prevention”? (Note also that the authors acknowledge that 80% of suicides are NOT committed with firearms, yet we see no mention of a “Hawaii Rope Violence Prevention Center” or a “Hawaii Knife Violence Prevention Center” or a “Hawaii Tall Building Violence Prevention Center” or a “Hawaii Sleeping Pill Violence Prevention Center”.) Why focus on the means of a mere 20% of “gun violence deaths”? It illustrates that conflating the majority of overall “gun deaths”, which are by far suicides (over 60%) compared to homicides, with “gun violence” is absurd and nothing more than deceptive propaganda methodology, as the same people have done by inventing the term “assault weapons” to attempt to confuse the uninformed that those are either fully automatic weapons or somehow more “dangerous” than other semi-automatic firearms having identical ballistic capabilities but merely having different cosmetic features. All the best quality studies show that there is a “substitution effect” wherein if one means of suicide is made more difficult to achieve, those determined to kill themselves simply resort to other means, and there is NO resulting decline in overall suicide. (Japan has a rate of suicide nearly 40% greater than the United States, and South Korea more than 50% greater, and virtually no ordinary citizen in either of those countries has access to firearms, and the “substitution effect” has proven true as those countries have taken means to attempt to restrict certain suicide methods).

The irony is that although the authors of the bill falsely claim that “Congress passed the Dickey Amendment, with a provision which prevents the use of federal money for gun violence research and prevention”, in fact **the CDC itself has produced the research** (“PRIORITIES FOR RESEARCH TO REDUCE THE THREAT OF FIREARM-RELATED VIOLENCE”), ordered by Obama in 2013 using his “pen and phone”, which states that the number of instances of self-defense using firearms (aka according to the authors of this bill “gun violence”) far exceeds (by 1.5 to 8 TIMES) the number of criminal uses of firearms in the commission of crimes. I ask again, why would people want to label self-defense with firearms, wherein people save their own lives and/or the lives of their family members or neighbors or even strangers, as a “danger to public safety”? Yet that's exactly what the authors of this bill assert. All “gun violence” must be “prevented”. Don't believe me? Just read the sources of the statistics they cite and decide for yourself.

To make their preposterous assumptions even more absurd, their “cost” of “gun violence” (“\$229,000,000,000 in 2012”) **only includes the “negative” consequences of firearm use**, not the entire other side of the equation, the economic savings as a consequence of all the lives saved via self-defense uses of firearms, which are far more numerous than the deaths and injuries to innocent people. What kind of math analysis is that? See Dean Weingarten's slightly expanded essay on this fact below. This is analogous to analyzing how many people die and/or are injured in hospitals, and ignoring how many are saved and cured, then performing an economic analysis of all the lives lost and limited by injury and concluding that “hospital death and injury” must be “prevented” due to the obvious “public safety” hazard, and the best and most certain form of prevention is elimination. No one would take such an analysis seriously re hospitals (and “doctor and nurse violence”), yet that is exactly what

the authors of this bill would have us believe re firearms. Why would they make such an obviously absurd claim? Are we supposed to believe that the consequences to the public of the justified self-defense homicide of the rapist murderer in the above example is that we have to subtract the rapist murderer's lost life earnings and paid taxes that he will no longer be able to pay as a debit to the public well-being? That's what the authors of this bill would have us believe. Look up the source of their claim re “the economic cost of gun violence was estimated at \$229,000,000,000 in 2012” claim. There is not a single instance counted on the positive side of the ledger for all the people who are still alive and uninjured due to their self-defense use of a firearm against criminals, and those people outnumber the criminal uses/costs by 1.5 to 8 TIMES. The authors expect us to believe their one-sided analysis? Why the deception?

Does the Dickey amendment do what the authors claim (“a provision which **prevents the use of federal money for gun violence research and prevention**”)? Another blatant lie. All we have to do is 1. read the actual Dickey amendment, and 2. note all the “gun violence” research the CDC has done since the Dickey amendment was enacted. Both of those facts make the claim of the authors of this bill to be “mistaken” at best. Here's the actual quote on the restriction imposed by the Dickey amendment in 1996: the **Dickey Amendment** is a provision first inserted as a rider into the 1996 federal government omnibus spending bill which mandated that "none of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **may be used to advocate or promote gun control**”.

NOT may not be used to research any firearms related events, but only against “**advocate or promote gun control**”. That's as clear as can be. The authors of this bill are liars, or ignorant.

You might ask, well why would Dickey introduce such a bill? Surely the CDC would only be producing pure research and not using public money to to “advocate or promote gun control”. You'd be wrong:

In a 1994 New York Times piece, titled “New Tactics Urged in Fight Against Crime,” you’ll find Mark Rosenberg” — then **director at the CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, which oversaw the “gun violence” research** — urging America “to revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes ... It used to be that smoking was a glamour symbol — cool, sexy, macho. Now it is dirty, deadly — and **banned**.”

It was Congress that did this because of the CDC's strong political stance against guns that was present in their work. This is due in part to, “[the] **official goal of the CDC’s parent agency, the U.S. Public Health Service, had been “...to reduce the number of handguns in private ownership**”, starting with a 25% reduction by the turn of the century.”

“We’re going to systematically build a case that owning firearms causes deaths. We’re doing the most we can do, given the political realities.” - P.W. O’Carroll, **Acting Section Head of Division of Injury Control, CDC**, quoted in Marsha F. Goldsmith, “Epidemiologists Aim at New Target: Health Risk of Handgun Proliferation,” Journal of the American Medical Association vol. 261 no. 5, February 3, 1989, pp. 675-76.

There are more examples of the CDC leaders “advocating and promoting gun control” without any evidence, but instead obviously indicating that they intended to make up (more) evidence. Thus the Dickey amendment, which only prohibited such advocacy. Why would we believe that any Hawaii-based research would be any different, given the makeup and obvious biases of the people who, like the

authors of this legislation, would be making the decisions as to who would get funding?

In 1996, 1997, and 1998 the CDC conducted research into the number of times firearms were used for self-defense in the United States. Each year the research yielded approximately the same results, around 2,000,000 (two million) individual cases of self-defense uses of firearms PER YEAR. These surveys were conducted AFTER the Dickey amendment was passed in 1996 and effective in the years of those studies. Those studies confirmed the number of defensive firearm uses as published in peer-reviewed journals by criminology professors Gary Kleck and Mark Gertz earlier. However, in some extremely peculiar and odd happenstance, the CDC did NOT publish nor ever make public that they had conducted this research, much less reveal the results. It was only in the past couple of years that this research confirming the Kleck and Gertz research was “accidentally” found by someone going through old stored data files at the CDC.

How could the CDC have conducted this research on firearm related violence in 1997, and 1998 if they were prohibited from doing so as of 1996 as the authors of this bill claim? How did the CDC produce Obama's 2013 CDC Report, "Priorities for Research to Reduce the Threat of Firearm-Related Violence"? How did the CDC produce the two following reports if they were banned from doing so? Please note that here the academics (over two dozen) who were involved in the creation of this CDC report, eschewed the use of the term “gun violence” for the slightly more accurate “firearm-related violence”, and they obviously included the beneficial aspects of firearm use, especially in the millions of annual cases of self-defense.

CDC Report, "Firearm Homicides and Suicides in Major Metropolitan Areas — United States, 2006–2007 and 2009–2010".

CDC Report, "Elevated Rates of Urban Firearm Violence and Opportunities for Prevention—Wilmington, Delaware Final Report".

The cases of other state funded “gun violence research centers” has produced nothing but “advocacy study” results, because they only grant funds to people who they already know will produce the results they want to see: “guns are bad”. Certainly from the justifications offered by the authors of this bill, it's clear that they have no interest in actual facts, but only in producing more deceptive propaganda that influence the uninformed to side with their agenda of further infringing law-abiding citizens' civil rights.

The claims by the authors of this bill are intellectually dishonest at best, possibly ignorant, and possibly blatant lies. We aren't privy to the knowledge level or motivations of the authors, but here is no evidence to support their claims. This bill is an attempt to establish a taxpayer-funded center to produce more biased “advocacy research” wherein “researchers” create study parameters (like discounting all self-defense uses of firearms) that will influence the uniformed public opinion with deceptive headlines that are nothing more than propaganda talking points, and thus does not merit support from taxpayers.

Vote NO on HB1541.

Thank you,
George Pace

I here provide just a few of the many explanations for and refutations of the deliberately deceptive claims provided by the authors of this bill to attempt to justify what cannot be justified on a factual

basis.

I have not included a copy of the 128 page CDC produced report order by Obama in 2013 as mentioned above, PRIORITIES FOR RESEARCH TO REDUCE THE THREAT OF FIREARM-RELATED VIOLENCE, but it is available at:

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/18319/priorities-for-research-to-reduce-the-threat-of-firearm-related-violence>

“Gun Violence” is a Propaganda Metric

By Dean Weingarten

The label “gun violence” has become epidemic in the debate about firearms law and the second amendment. “Gun Violence” is a propaganda metric designed to win the debate in public discourse about the second amendment. It accomplishes this by defining the terms in a way favorable to gun prohibition efforts. Here is an example to illustrate the technique, using hospitals.

No one favors people dying in hospitals. Why would anyone want someone to die in a hospital? Therefore, we can create a legislative solution to hospital deaths. We can prevent nearly all hospital deaths with a simple law. All we need to do is to outlaw hospitals. Then people will not die in hospitals, and we will have virtually eliminated hospital deaths!

Of course, the overall death rate will now rise because the usefulness of hospitals will have been outlawed along with hospital deaths.

This is the construct of the term “gun violence”. When you lump all violence in which a gun is used into one category and define reducing that number as a positive good, in and of itself, you necessarily discard or negate anything positive that results from “gun violence”, and ignore violence that results from the substitution of other methods. That is the semantic trick that is being employed in this instance.

To avoid this trap, researchers need to look at **all unjustified violence** to see if policies that reduce “gun violence” reduce overall unjustified violence. If substitution of other methods increased the level of overall unjustified violence, or if no significant change in the level of unjustified violence occurs, then the policy had no positive effect. Ideally, but far more difficult, the research should be over sufficient time to take into account long term effects. That is the method that John Lott and other researchers used when they found that more guns resulted in less crime.

I use the term unjustified violence because violence itself is neutral, like gravity. Violence can be used for good or evil. If violence is used to defend the innocent or to protect society, it can most certainly be good. If violence is used for evil purposes, it can be evil.

Medically, this is similar to testing a new drug to prevent strokes, but ignoring the number of people who are given the drug who are dying of heart attacks. Doctors, who would never condone giving a drug that caused as many or more deaths as it prevented, seem to have no qualms about prescribing “gun control” without considering the lethal side effects of such measures.

Many papers have been written that measure the propaganda metric “gun violence” or often “gun deaths”. When you see that metric in a paper, it shows that the authors are engaged in either academic fraud or academic malpractice. Either the authors did not consider the possibilities of positive uses of

guns or the substitution of other methods, or they are making a political statement that death by gunshot is more wrong than death by knife, bomb, arson, blunt object, or beating by hands and feet. If they did not consider positive uses of guns or substitution of methods, their work can be discarded as fatally flawed. If they are making a political statement, then the work is political advocacy, not academic study.

If as many or more people die by murder and suicide after a gun ban as before the ban, all other factors being equal, then the ban has not had a positive effect. Of course, serious research needs to look at trends, multiple regression analysis, and numerous other factors, because “all other factors being equal” is a very rare condition in the real world. There are many ways to commit academic fraud and to lie with statistics.

It is clear that researchers who only measure “gun violence” or “gun deaths” are pushing propaganda, not serious research into ways to reduce the unjustified death rate.

<https://www.ammoland.com/2014/03/gun-violence-is-a-propaganda-metric/#axzz5eLEVfUiM>

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Is the CDC Banned from Researching Gun Control?

According to our liberal friends, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is banned from researching gun violence, and it’s all thanks to the NRA.

In October 2017, following the massacre at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas, the **Washington Post** ran an article titled “Why gun violence research has been shut down for 20 years.” In it, the author Todd Frankel writes that “In 1996, the Republican-majority Congress threatened to strip funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention unless it stopped funding research into firearm injuries and deaths. The National Rifle Association accused the CDC of promoting gun control. As a result, the CDC stopped funding gun-control research.”

What Frankel is referring to is the **Dickey Amendment**, named after Arkansas Republican Jay Dickey. It was as a result of his amendment that the CDC saw \$2.6 million cut from their budget, the exact amount they had spent on gun control efforts. It’s based off this chain of events that we see headlines like:

- This Senator Wants to Revive Federal Research on Gun Violence, 22 Years After Congress Banned It – **Mother Jones**
-
- Treat gun violence like the public health epidemic it is and lift research ban – **The Baltimore Sun**
-
- The CDC Can’t Fund Gun Violence Research. What if that Changed? – **Wired**
-

But here’s the thing – **the CDC was never banned from researching gun violence, or gun control**, despite the Dickey Amendment. According to The Federalist’s **David Harsanyi**:

Absolutely nothing in the amendment prohibits the CDC from studying “gun violence,” In response to this inconvenient fact, gun controllers will explain that while

there isn't an outright ban, the Dickey amendment has a "chilling" effect on the study of gun violence. Unlikely is the notion that a \$2.6 million cut in funding so horrified the agency that it was rendered powerless to pay for or conduct studies on gun violence. The CDC funding tripled from 1996 to 2010. The CDC's budget is over six billion dollars today.

I assume that the purpose of this talking point is to suggest that opponents of gun control fear having their beliefs debunked, but when **Obama had the CDC study gun violence in 2013** (which you'd think would debunk this bogus narrative in it of itself), it hardly came to the conclusions that Obama wanted. In fact, the study acknowledged that there could be millions of self-defensive gun uses each year, and doesn't mention gun control once in its discussion of mass public shootings.

Defensive Use of Guns

Defensive use of guns by crime victims is a common occurrence, although the exact number remains disputed (Cook and Ludwig, 1996; Kleck, 2001a). Almost all national survey estimates indicate that defensive gun uses by victims are at least as common as offensive uses by criminals, with estimates of annual uses ranging from about 500,000 to more than 3 million (Kleck, 2001a), in the context of about 300,000 violent crimes involving firearms in 2008 (BJS, 2010). On the other hand, some scholars point to a radically lower estimate of only 108,000 annual defensive uses based on the National Crime Victimization Survey (Cook et al., 1997). The variation in these numbers remains a controversy in the field. The estimate of 3 million defensive uses per year is based on an extrapolation from a small number of responses taken from more than 19 national surveys. The former estimate of 108,000 is difficult to interpret because respondents were not asked specifically about defensive gun use.

A different issue is whether defensive uses of guns, however numerous or rare they may be, are effective in preventing injury to the gun-wielding crime victim. Studies that directly assessed the effect of actual

Mass Shootings

According to the Congressional Research Service, public mass shootings “have claimed 547 lives and led to an additional 476 injured victims” since 1983 (Bjelopera et al., 2013, pp. 7-8). Mass shootings are a highly visible and moving tragedy, but represent only a small fraction of total firearm-related violence. Although it may seem that protection against such an event is nearly impossible, proactive law enforcement activities, including community policing and intelligence-led policing, may help prevent some mass shootings (Bjelopera et al., 2013). Analyzing the details of a prevented event against those of a realized event might provide guidance to schools and other locations with large groups of people about efficient and effective ways to avoid such an event. Proactive mental health risk assessment and interventions may also prevent some mass shootings. It is also apparent that some mass murder incidents are associated with suicides (Bell and McBride, 2010). However,

That’s hardly the only study out of the CDC that could hardly be considered damning to those favoring gun rights. Back in the 1990s the CDC conducted a series of surveys on self-defensive gun use in 1996, 1997, and 1998, then proceed to never release the findings or publicly acknowledge that they were researching the subject.

The question asked in the CDC survey addressed the use or threatened use of a firearm to deter a crime. “During the last 12 months, have you confronted another person with a firearm, even if you did not fire it, to protect yourself, your property, or someone else?”

Florida State University criminologist **Gary Kleck** recently got access to the surveys, and after reviewing them discovered that they found “in an average year during 1996–1998, 2.46 million U.S. adults used a gun for self-defense.”

At least two of those surveys was conducted in years that liberals claim the CDC was banned from conducting gun research.

Language clarifying that the Dickey Amendment does not prohibit the research of gun violence was signed into law by President Donald Trump on March 23rd of this year. Ironically, by the looks of the CDC’s past research, this won’t bode well for those advocating for the Dickey Amendment’s repeal.

* * * * *

No, Government Isn't 'Banned' From Studying Gun Violence

Gun control advocates want to lift the ban on politically motivated gun research because they're interested in politically motivated research.

A popular fiction circulating around the gun debate these days contends that “the government” has been “banned” from studying “gun violence.” This prohibition, I’m regularly assured, has led to a dearth of reliable science on firearms, and only when it’s lifted can America start alleviating the “epidemic” of mass shootings.

“Why Can’t the U.S. Treat Gun Violence as a Public-Health Problem?” asks one major publication. “Gun violence research by the government hasn’t been funded in two decades. But that may soon change,” says another. “The CDC can’t fund gun research. What if that changed?” ponders a third.

And on and on and on.

The most obvious problem with this assertion is that it’s untrue.

In 1996, a few years after the Center for Disease Controls had funded a highly controversial study that has since embedded itself into the “scientific” case for gun control, Arkansas Republican Jay Dickey* added an amendment to a funding bill that dictated “none of the funds made available for injury prevention and control” should be used to “advocate or promote gun control.” That same year, Congress also cut \$2.6 million from the CDC’s budget, the amount it spent on gun control efforts. Bill Clinton signed it into law. Absolutely nothing in the amendment prohibits the CDC from studying “gun violence,” even if this narrowly focused topic tells us little. In response to this inconvenient fact, gun controllers will explain that while there isn’t an outright ban, the Dickey amendment has a “chilling” effect on the study of gun violence.

Does it? Pointing out that “research plummeted after the 1996 ban” could just as easily tell us that most research funded by the CDC had been politically motivated. Because the idea that the CDC, whose spectacular mission creep has taken it from its primary goal of preventing malaria and other dangerous communicable diseases, to spending hundreds of millions of

dollars nagging you about how much salt you put on your steaks or how often you do calisthenics, is nervous about the repercussions of engaging in non-partisan research is hard to believe.

Also unlikely is the notion that a \$2.6 million cut in funding so horrified the agency that it was rendered powerless to pay for or conduct studies on gun violence. The CDC funding *tripled* from 1996 to 2010. The CDC's budget is over six billion dollars today. And the idea that the CDC was paralyzed through two-years of full Democratic Party control, and then six years under a president who was more antagonistic towards the Second Amendment than any other in history, is difficult to believe, because it's provably false.

In 2013, President Barack Obama not only signed an Executive Order directing the CDC to research "gun violence," the administration also provided an additional \$10 million to do it. Here is the study on gun violence that was supposedly banned and yet funded by the CDC. You might not have heard about the resulting research, because it contains numerous inconvenient facts about gun ownership that fails to propel the predetermined narrative. Trump's HHS Secretary Alex Azar is also open to the idea of funding more gun violence research.

It's not banned. It's not chilled.

Meanwhile, numerous states and private entities fund peer-reviewed studies and other research on gun violence. I know this because gun control advocates are constantly sending me studies that distort and conflate issues to help them make their arguments. My inbox is bombarded with studies and conferences and "webinars" dissecting gun violence.

The real problem here is two-fold. One, researchers want the CDC involved so they can access government data about American gun owners. Considering the rhetoric coming from Democrats — gun ownership being tantamount to terrorism, and so on — there's absolutely no reason Republicans should acquiesce to helping gun controllers circumvent the privacy of Americans citizens peacefully practicing their Constitutional rights.

Second, gun control advocates want to lift the ban on politically skewed research because *they're interested in producing politically skewed research*. When the American Medical Association declares gun violence a "public health crisis," it's not interested in a

balance look at the issue. When researchers advocate lifting the restrictions on advocacy at the CDC, they don't even pretend they not to hold pre-conceived notions about the outcomes. It's also worth noting that concerns over the politicization of the CDC were, then as now, well founded. If you read this 1994 *New York Times* piece, titled "New Tactics Urged in Fight Against Crime," you'll find Mark Rosenberg" — then director at the CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, which oversaw the "gun violence" research — urging America "to revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes ... It used to be that smoking was a glamour symbol — cool, sexy, macho. Now it is dirty, deadly — and banned."

There's no reason to allow activists — then or now — to use the veneer of state-sanctioned science for their partisan purposes. For example, we now know that Rosenberg and others at the CDC turned out to be wrong about the correlation between guns and crime — a steep drop in gun crimes coincided with the explosions of gun ownership from 1996 to 2014.

The Dickey Amendment *might* keep the CDC from funding activism. What it doesn't do is stop the CDC from funding good-faith rigorous research into violence.

<http://thefederalist.com/2018/03/09/no-government-isnt-banned-from-studying-gun-violence/>

* * * * *

"None of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may be used to advocate or promote gun control."- This does not "ban" the CDC from researching gun violence. CDC was not banned from doing the research. In fact, CDC articles pertaining to firearms have held steady since the defunding, and even increased to 121 in 2013.

CDC very recently released a 16-page report that was commissioned by the city council of Wilmington, Delaware, on factors contributing to its abnormally high gun crime, and methods of prevention. The study weighed factors such as where the guns were coming from, the sex of the offenders, likeliness of committing a gun crime, and how unemployment plays a factor. In other words it studied, the environment surrounding the crime. It's purpose was to prevent biased advocacy on political views, which is something that cannot be included in research by definition.

In the late '80s and early '90s, the CDC was openly biased in opposing gun rights. CDC official and research head Patrick O'Carroll stated in a 1989 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, "We're going to systematically build a case that owning firearms causes deaths." His successor and director of the CDC National Center of Injury Prevention branch Mark Rosenberg told *Rolling Stone* in 1993 that he "envision[s] a long term campaign, similar to tobacco use and auto safety, to convince Americans that guns are, first and foremost, a public health menace." He went on to tell the *Washington Post* in 1994 "We need to revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes. It used to be that smoking was a glamour symbol — cool, sexy, macho. Now it is dirty, deadly — and banned."

CDC leaders were not shy about their intentions of banning guns from the public. Sure enough, they acted on their desires. In October 1993, *The New England Journal of Medicine* released a study funded by the CDC to the tune of

\$1.7 million, entitled “Gun Ownership as a Risk Factor for Homicide in the Home.” The leader author was Dr. Arthur Kellermann, an epidemiologist, physician, and outspoken advocate of gun control.

In the study, Kellerman concluded that people who kept guns in their homes were 2.7 times more likely to be homicide victims as people who don't. Major media outlets, such as the New York Times, still cite these statistics.

However, the research was beyond flawed. For one, Kellermann used epidemiological methods in an attempt to investigate an issue dealing with criminology. In effect, this means he was treating gun violence the same as, say, the spread of West Nile, or bird flu.

It provided no proof or examples that the murder weapon used in these crimes belonged to the homeowner or had been kept in that home.

Furthermore, the gun victims he studied were anomalies. They were selected from homicide victims living in metropolitan areas with high gun-crime statistics, which completely discounted the statistical goliath of areas where gun owners engage in little to no crime.

Other factors that lent to the study's unreliability were: It is based entirely on people murdered in their homes, with 50 percent admitting this was the result of a “quarrel or romantic triangle,” and 30 percent said it was during a drug deal or other felonies such as rape or burglary; it made no consideration for guns used in self-defense; it provided no proof or examples that the murder weapon used in these crimes belonged to the homeowner or had been kept in that home.

These problems prompted objections and questions from leading scientists in the field of criminology, such as Yale University professor John Lott, Florida State's Gary Kleck, and University of Massachusetts sociology professors James D. Wright and Peter H. Rossi. Their research had come to vastly different conclusions, and they found the methodology unsound.

As Lott says of Kellermann's study in his book, “More Guns, Less Crime”: To demonstrate this, suppose that we use the same statistical method—with a matching control group—to do a study on the efficacy of hospital care. Assume that we collect data just as these authors did, compiling a list of all the people who died in a particular county over the period of a year. Then we ask their relatives whether they had been admitted to the hospital during the previous year. We also put together a control sample consisting of neighbors who are part of the same sex, race, and age group. Then we ask these men and women whether they have been in a hospital during the past year. My bet is that those who spent time in hospitals are much more likely to have died — quite probably a stronger relationship than that between homicides and gun ownership in Kellerman's study. If so, would we take that as evidence that hospitals kill people?

He summarized, “it's like comparing 100 people who went to a hospital in a given year with 100 similar people who did not, finding that more of the hospital patients died, and then announcing that hospitals increase the risk of death.” The final nail in the coffin came in 1995 when the Injury Prevention Network Newsletter told its readers to “organize a picket at gun manufacturing sites” and to “work for campaign finance reform to weaken the gun lobby's political clout.”

Appearing on the same page as the article pointing the finger at gun owners for the Oklahoma City bombing were the words, “This newsletter was supported in part by Grant #R49/CCR903697-06 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

I'm fine with the CDC studying it like they do now, as long as the requirement to study it unbiasedly is still there. Do we really want government agencies "researching" topics to come to a predetermined finding? If we change a few words from the quotes that precipitated the "ban" would we be against it?

In the late '80s and early '90s, the CDC was openly biased in opposing gay rights. CDC official and research head Patrick O'Carroll stated in a 1989 issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association, “We're going to systematically build a case that homosexuality causes AIDS deaths.”

His successor and director of the CDC National Center of Injury Prevention branch Mark Rosenberg told Rolling Stone in 1993 that he "envisioned a long term campaign, similar to tobacco use and auto safety, to convince Americans that gays are, first and foremost, a public health menace." He went on to tell the Washington Post in 1994 "We need to revolutionize the way we look at homosexuals, like what we did with cigarettes.

* * * * *

Dispelling the Myth That the US Government is Banned From Studying Gun Violence.

Origins of the Myth

At its core this is a gross misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the fact. While the US government and its agencies are free to conduct whatever research, studies, or reports on the subject they see fit the CDC is explicitly barred from using its funds to promote gun control.

The actual law reads as such:

"None of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may be used to advocate or promote gun control." - Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997

So the CDC can research whatever they want, produce any studies or reports they want, and present any findings they want. The only thing they cannot do is use their funding to promote gun control, which is a political position.

The Reasoning behind the Restriction

Those that repeat and propagate this myth often blame the NRA for it. However as the above citation shows the actual law was put in place by the US Congress.

It was Congress that did this because of the CDC's strong political stance against guns that was present in their work. This is due in part to, " [the] official goal of the CDC's parent agency, the U.S. Public Health Service, had been "...to reduce the number of handguns in private ownership", starting with a 25% reduction by the turn of the century."

But why would the US Congress feel so compelled to implement such a specific measure? As the aforementioned quote mentioned the CDC, by its own admission, took a stance against gun ownership and produced biased studies and reports to support the predetermined objective of promoting gun control.

"We're going to systematically build a case that owning firearms causes deaths. We're doing the most we can do, given the political realities. - P.W. O'Carroll, Acting Section Head of Division of Injury Control, CDC, quoted in Marsha F. Goldsmith, "Epidemiologists Aim at New Target: Health Risk of Handgun Proliferation," Journal of the American Medical Association vol. 261 no. 5, February 3, 1989, pp. 675-76.

"In 1979 the American public health community adopted the "objective to reduce the number of handguns in private ownership," the initial target being a 25% reduction by the year 2000.³ Based on studies, and propelled by leadership from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the

objective has broadened so that it now includes banning and confiscation of all handguns, restrictive licensing of owners of other firearms, and eventual elimination of firearms from American life, excepting (perhaps) only a small elite of extremely wealthy collectors, hunters, or target shooters. This is the case in many European countries."

The Clear Evidence that Disproves the Myth

Still the most damning evidence that disproves this myth are the reports and studies themselves. Here are some recent studies on gun violence produced by the CDC:

CDC Report, "Firearm Homicides and Suicides in Major Metropolitan Areas — United States, 2006–2007 and 2009–2010".

CDC Report, "Elevated Rates of Urban Firearm Violence and Opportunities for Prevention—Wilmington, Delaware Final Report".

CDC, Report, "Priorities for Research to Reduce the Threat of Firearm-Related Violence".

Besides these the CDC has also conducted firearms related studies from those on suicides to those on hearing safety, such as:

CDC Report, "Noise and Lead Exposures at an Outdoor Firing Range — California"

Increase in Suicide in the United States, 1999–2014

In addition to the CDC reports there are a plethora of government agencies and organizations that conduct firearm related and specific studies and reports ranging from annual reports to special studies. These include:

FBI Annual Uniform Crime Reporting

FBI report "A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 and 2013"

The Congressional Research Service's report "Mass Murder with Firearms: Incidents and Victims, 1999-2013"

DOJ Report to National Institute of Justice, "Updated Assessment of the Federal Assault Weapons Ban: Impacts on Gun Markets and Gun Violence, 1994-2003"

DOJ's "Firearm Use by Offenders".

The Bureau of Justice Statistics alone has Over 20 gun related studies and reports over the past two decades.

Conclusion

So not only can the US government conduct studies, research, and reports on the subject they have they have produced a vast amount if those over the past few decades.

* * * * *

CDC Gun Research Backfires on Obama

In the wake of the Sandy Hook tragedy, President Obama issued a list of Executive Orders. Notably among them, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was given \$10 million to research gun violence.

"Year after year, those who oppose even modest gun-safety measures have threatened to defund scientific or medical research into the causes of gun violence, I will direct the Centers for Disease Control to go ahead and study the best ways to reduce it," Obama said on Jan. 16.

As a result, a 1996 Congressional ban on research by the CDC "to advocate or promote gun control" was lifted. Finally, anti-gun proponents- and presumably the Obama Administration- thought gun owners and the NRA would be met with irrefutable scientific evidence to support why guns make Americans less safe.

Mainstream media outlets praised the order to lift the ban and lambasted the NRA and Congress for having put it in place.

It was the "Executive Order the NRA Should Fear the Most," according to The Atlantic.

The CDC ban on gun research "caused lasting damage," reported ABC News.

Salon said the ban was part of the NRA's "war on gun science."

And CBS News lamented that the NRA "stymied" CDC research.

Most mainstream journalists argued the NRA's opposition to CDC gun research demonstrated its fear of being contradicted by science; few- if any- cited why the NRA may have had legitimate concerns. The culture of the CDC at the time could hardly be described as lacking bias on firearms.

"We need to revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes," Dr. Mark Rosenberg, who oversaw CDC gun research, told The Washington Post in 1994. "Now [smoking] is dirty, deadly and banned."

Does Rosenberg sound like a man who should be trusted to conduct taxpayer-funded studies on guns?

Rosenberg's statement coincided with a CDC study by Arthur Kellermann and Donald Reay, who argued guns in the home are 43 times more likely to be used to kill a family member than an intruder. The study had serious flaws; namely, it skewed the ratio by failing to consider defensive uses of firearms in which the intruder wasn't killed. It has since been refuted by several studies, including one by Florida State University criminologist Gary Kleck, indicating Americans use guns for self-defense 2.5 million times annually. However, the damage had been done- the "43 times" myth is perhaps gun-control advocates' most commonly cited argument, and a lot of people still believe it to this day.

So, the NRA and Congress took action. But with the ban lifted, what does the CDC's first major gun research in 17 years reveal? Not exactly what Obama and anti-gun advocates expected. In fact, you might say Obama's plan backfired.

Here are some key findings from the CDC report, "Priorities for Research to Reduce the Threat of Firearm-Related Violence," released in June:

1. Armed citizens are less likely to be injured by an attacker:

"Studies that directly assessed the effect of actual defensive uses of guns (i.e., incidents in which a gun was 'used' by the crime victim in the sense of attacking or threatening an offender) have found consistently lower injury rates among gun-using crime victims compared with victims who used other self-protective strategies."

2. Defensive uses of guns are common:

"Almost all national survey estimates indicate that defensive gun uses by victims are at least as common as offensive uses by criminals, with estimates of annual uses ranging from about 500,000 to more than 3 million per year... in the context of about 300,000 violent crimes involving firearms in 2008."

3. Mass shootings and accidental firearm deaths account for a small fraction of gun-related deaths, and both are declining:

"The number of public mass shootings of the type that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School accounted for a very small fraction of all firearm-related deaths. Since 1983 there have been 78 events in which 4 or more individuals were killed by a single perpetrator in 1 day in the United States, resulting in 547 victims and 476 injured persons." The report also notes, "Unintentional firearm-related deaths have steadily declined during the past century. The number of unintentional deaths due to firearm-related incidents accounted for less than 1 percent of all unintentional fatalities in 2010."

4. "Interventions" (i.e, gun control) such as background checks, so-called assault rifle bans and gun-free zones produce "mixed" results:

"Whether gun restrictions reduce firearm-related violence is an unresolved issue." The report could not conclude whether "passage of right-to-carry laws decrease or increase violence crime."

5. Gun buyback/turn-in programs are "ineffective" in reducing crime:

"There is empirical evidence that gun turn in programs are ineffective, as noted in the 2005 NRC study *Firearms and Violence: A Critical Review*. For example, in 2009, an estimated 310 million guns were available to civilians in the United States (Krouse, 2012), but gun buy-back programs typically recover less than 1,000 guns (NRC, 2005). On the local level, buy-backs may increase awareness of firearm violence. However, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for example, guns recovered in the buy-back were not the same guns as those most often used in homicides and suicides (Kuhn et al., 2002)."

6. Stolen guns and retail/gun show purchases account for very little crime:

"More recent prisoner surveys suggest that stolen guns account for only a small percentage of guns used by convicted criminals. According to a 1997 survey of inmates, approximately 70 percent of the guns used or possess by criminals at the time of their arrest came from family or friends, drug dealers, street purchases, or the underground market."

7. The vast majority of gun-related deaths are not homicides, but suicides:

"Between the years 2000-2010 firearm-related suicides significantly outnumbered homicides for all age groups, annually accounting for 61 percent of the more than 335,600 people who died from firearms related violence in the United States."

Why No One Has Heard This

Given the CDC's prior track record on guns, you may be surprised by the extent with which the new research refutes some of the anti-gun movement's deepest convictions.

What are opponents of the Second Amendment doing about the new data? Perhaps predictably, they're ignoring it. President Obama, Michael Bloomberg and the Brady Campaign remain silent. Most suspicious of all, the various media outlets that so eagerly anticipated the CDC research are looking the other way as well. One must wonder how media coverage of the CDC report may have differed, had the research more closely fit an anti-gun narrative.

Even worse, the few mainstream journalists who did report the CDC's findings chose to cherry-pick from the data. Most, like NBC News, reported exclusively on the finding that gun suicides are up. Largely lost in that discussion is the fact that the overall rate of suicide- regardless of whether a gun is involved or not- is also up.

Others seized upon the CDC's finding that, "The U.S. rate of firearm-related homicide is higher than that of any other industrialized country: 19.5 times higher than the rates in other high-income countries." However, as noted by the Las Vegas Guardian Express, if figures are excluded from such anti-gun bastions as Illinois, California, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., "The homicide rate in the United States would be in line with any other country."

The CDC report is overall a blow to the Obama Administration's unconstitutional agenda. It largely supports the Second Amendment, and contradicts common anti-gun arguments. Unfortunately, mainstream media failed to get the story they were hoping for, and their silence on the matter is a screaming illustration of their underlying agenda.

* * * * *

Obama Study Concluded Firearms Used for Self-Defense ‘Important Crime Deterrent’

“Self-defense can be an important crime deterrent,” concluded a study by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) mandated via executive order by President Barack Obama. The findings also question the effectiveness of gun-control measures.

The \$10 million study was commissioned by President Barack Obama as part of 23 executive orders he signed in January of 2013.

The study’s findings include:

Gun-use is the safest of studied “self-protective strategies,”

Suicide accounts for most firearm deaths,

Felons who use guns very seldom obtain their guns by stealing them, and

There is no evidence that gun restrictions reduce gun violence.

“Studies that directly assessed the effect of actual defensive uses of guns (i.e., incidents in which a gun was ‘used’ by the crime victim in the sense of attacking or threatening an offender) have found consistently lower injury rates among gun-using crime victims compared with victims who used other self-protective strategies,” the CDC study, entitled “Priorities For Research to Reduce the Threat of Firearm-Related Violence,” states.

Researchers also found that the majority of firearm deaths are from suicide, not homicide. “Between the years 2000 and 2010, firearm-related suicides significantly outnumbered homicides for all age groups, annually accounting for 61 percent of the more than 335,600 people who died from firearm-related violence in the United States.”

“Most felons report obtaining the majority of their firearms from informal sources,” adds the report, while “stolen guns account for only a small percentage of guns used by convicted criminals.”

The report expresses uncertainty about gun control measures, stating that “whether gun restrictions reduce firearm-related violence is an unresolved issue,” and that there is no evidence “that passage of right-to-carry laws decrease or increase violence crime.” It also stated that proposed “gun turn-in programs are ineffective.”

Instead, researchers proposed gun safety technologies such as “external locking devices and biometric systems” to reduce firearm-related deaths.

* * * * *



The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

State Capitol, Room 430
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

HEARING: Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 3pm

RE: HB1541 HD1 Relating to Gun Violence Prevention

Aloha Members of the House Committee,

The Hawaii Firearms Coalition OPPOSES HB1541 HD1

A gun violence center is a waste of taxpayer's money and is not the solution to Hawaii's problems. It is noted in the bill text that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is prohibited from conducting firearms research. This is wrong. The Centers for Disease Control does publish recent firearms related research (see attachment example) therefore funding a research center in Hawaii is not needed. The Dickey's amendment noted in the bill instead says "None of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may be used to advocate or promote gun control." (see attachment)

It is already known that criminals, many of whom are already prohibited from possessing a gun, are the source of Hawaii's violent crime problems. The money allocated for this research center should be put towards keeping violent offenders in prison, rehabilitation, and enforcement.

The Hawaii Firearms Coalition believes that a Gun Violence Prevention Center will be inherently biased against Hawaii's law abiding gun owners as Hawaii has a history of civil rights violations against the 2nd amendment.

For these reasons the Hawaii Firearms Coalition Opposes HB1541 HD1. Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo

Todd Yukutake
Director, Hawaii Firearms Coalition
PH. (808) 255-3066
Email: todd@hifico.org

Additional Requirement - 13: Prohibition on Use of CDC Funds for Certain Gun Control Activities

The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act specifies that: “None of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may be used to advocate or promote gun control.”

Anti-Lobbying Act requirements prohibit lobbying Congress with appropriated Federal monies. Specifically, this Act prohibits the use of Federal funds for direct or indirect communications intended or designed to influence a member of Congress with regard to specific Federal legislation. This prohibition includes the funding and assistance of public grassroots campaigns intended or designed to influence members of Congress with regard to specific legislation or appropriation by Congress.

In addition to the restrictions in the Anti-Lobbying Act, CDC interprets the language in the CDC’s Appropriations Act to mean that CDC’s funds may not be spent on political action or other activities designed to affect the passage of specific Federal, State, or local legislation intended to restrict or control the purchase or use of firearms.



Firearm Homicides and Suicides in Major Metropolitan Areas – United States, 2012–2013 and 2015–2016

Weekly / November 9, 2018 / 67(44);1233–1237

Free CE (<https://tceols.cdc.gov//Course/Detail2?activityID2=3586&activityInstanceID2=6525>)

Subscribe to MMWR (https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCDC/subscriber/new?topic_id=USCDC_921)

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Scott R. Kegler, PhD¹; Linda L. Dahlberg, PhD²; James A. Mercy, PhD² ([View author affiliations](#))

[View suggested citation](#)

Firearm homicides and suicides represent a continuing public health concern in the United States. During 2015–2016, a total of 27,394 firearm homicides (including 3,224 [12%] among persons aged 10–19 years) and 44,955 firearm suicides (including 2,118 [5%] among persons aged 10–19 years) occurred among U.S. residents (1). This report updates an earlier report (2) that provided statistics on firearm homicides and suicides in major metropolitan areas during 2006–2007 and 2009–2010, and places continued emphasis on youths, in recognition of the importance of early prevention efforts. Firearm homicide and suicide rates were determined for the 50 most populous U.S. metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs)* during 2012–2013 and 2015–2016 using mortality data from the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. In contrast to the earlier report, which indicated that firearm homicide rates among persons of all ages had been declining both nationally and in large MSAs overall, current findings show that rates have returned to levels comparable to those observed during 2006–2007. Consistent with the earlier report, these findings show that firearm suicide rates among persons aged ≥10 years have continued to increase, both nationally and in large MSAs overall. Although firearm suicide rates among youths remain notably lower than those among persons of all ages, youth rates have also increased both nationally and in large MSAs collectively. These findings can inform ongoing development and monitoring of strategies directed at reducing firearm-related violence.

NVSS mortality data for 2012–2013 and 2015–2016 were used to identify firearm homicides (*International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* [ICD-10] underlying cause codes X93–X95 and U01.4 [U.S. extension to ICD-10]) and firearm suicides (codes X72–X74) among U.S. residents. Firearm homicide and suicide counts were tabulated for county groupings forming the 50 largest MSAs (by population rank mid-year 2016).[†] Tabulated

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:35:45 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kainoa Kaku	Hawaii Rifle Association	Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:35:09 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Malia Kaku	Hawaii Rifle Association	Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:34:42 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sherry Kaku	Hawaii Rifle Association	Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:34:02 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Kaku	Hawaii Rifle Association	Oppose	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 10:25:56 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 2:45:58 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Devin Sasai	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 3:38:36 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Isaacson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

It seems fairly clear from the preamble to this bill that the real purpose of this bill is to fund gun control research, not violence prevention. Using public money to denigrate a constitutional right, in other words, to tax the public in order to fund curtailing their rights does not pass any number of legal tests. The national CDC is not forbidden from researching gun violence, but it is forbidden to promote gun control under the guise of gun violence research, and any Hawaii State agency should have the same restrictions. Public funds should not be used to try to curtail constitutional rights.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 5:22:33 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin Kacatin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this measure and implore the Judiciary Committee to consider the facts as presented in Hawaii Attorney General reports that show how violence with firearms is some of the lowest in the nation.

Gun owners in Hawaii have proven year after year that we are some of the most responsible citizens in Hawaii Nei and the constant and unwarranted scrutiny we face is problematic and creates a deeper disconnect between citizens and elected officials.

Kevin Kacatin
Pearl City, HI

Marcella Alohalani Boido, M. A.
Hawaii Judiciary Certified Spanish Court Interpreter, Tier 4

Voting resident, Senate District 10, House District 21. Moili'ili, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

To: Chair, Rep. Chris Lee; Vice-Chair, Rep. Joy San Buenaventura
Members, House Committee on Judiciary

Re: **HB 1541 HD 1, SUPPORT**

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2019, 3:00 p.m., Room 325

Chair C. Lee, Vice-Chair San Buenaventura, and Committee Members: Thank you for hearing HB 1541 HD 1.

This testimony is presented as a private individual. HB 1541 HD 1 will enable state and county government entities to make well-informed, data-based decisions, so we can make Hawaii a safer and more peaceful place to live.

As the Legislative Reference Bureau made clear in their report, "Straight Shooting: An Objective Review of Hawaii Firearms Laws and Related Statistics" (<http://lrbhawaii.org/reports/legrpts/lrb/2018/18-01.pdf>), Report #1, 2018, "Applicable information is limited."

This bill touches on the *kuleana* of a number of government entities, non-profits, and professional and other interest groups. Having reviewed the testimony, I agree with the amendments in HD 1.

On my father's side of my family, we have had relatives who are gun owners and users for at least 100 years, both in the USA and in Mexico. We still have them. Most of them use long guns for hunting. One of my relatives works part-time as a hunting guide in both the USA and Mexico. These relatives treat guns as tools. Hopefully, gun owners in Hawaii with a similar orientation will also support this bill in the future.

Policy creation should be based on scientifically rigorous research whenever possible. Hawaii could well use the information we can hope will be generated by the proposed Hawaii Gun Violence Prevention Center, to be located at the University of Hawaii, in the formulation of laws, policies, and actions. More objective data, and more emotional detachment, would be helpful to our community.

Thank you for taking the time to hear this bill. Respectfully, I ask this Committee to pass HB 1541 HD 1.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:10:49 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:38:58 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:46:34 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Russell Takata	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE this measure. This is unnecessary government funding open to much politics and bias on the issue of gun violence. Funding is better spent on focusing on more prominent local problems such as mental illness, alcohol and drug abuse, and the increase in annual traffic fatalities,

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:59:01 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shanell Holton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I do not believe it is warranted at this time to spend tax payers dollars to create a task force with regard to gun violence research. There are many more important areas within our state that a special fund would be useful for. Gun violence in Hawaii is minimal in comparison to the national statistics. In your own words you state that the leading cause of fatal injury in Hawaii is resulting from Suicide with only 20% involving a gun. It seems that rather than spending tax payer funds to research gun violence it should be directed towards research on suicide prevention.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 10:41:45 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gershon Holton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this bill due to its gross waste of taxpayer dollars for a non-issue because Hawaii has one of the lowest gun violence rates in the entire country if not the world. Money should be allocated for other things including suicide prevention.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:22:54 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
steven a kumasaka	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

waste of time/money

the legislature JUST LAST YEAR commissioned a report on gun violence and it showed that Hawaii does not have a problem. please READ the report THE TAXPAYERS ALREADY SPENT A LOT OF MONEY ON.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:41:08 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joel Berg	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Hawaii has a lot of problems. We have a drug problem, a property crime problem, a homelessness problem, an education problem, a traffic problem, and an infrastructure problem. What we do NOT have is a gun problem. Rather than wasting our limited tax dollars subsidizing a study with predetermined outcomes please take those resources and start chipping away at the real causes of human misery here in the islands.

Thank you for taking time to address my concerns.

Captain Joel Berg

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 9:36:11 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brendon Heal	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is a complete waste of taxpayer dollars. Gun violence is a NON issue in Hawaii, compared to ALL the other problems that need IMMEDIATE ATTENTION in this State.

Do not waste time on these anti gun agenda bills. They go against the Constitution of the United States, the constitution of Hawaii, AND are in contrary to your sworn oaths when you took office!

I am a voter, and I promise you, no gun control and anti-Constitution legislator will never get another vote from me, or from those who would defend freedom.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 9:37:14 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jerry Yuen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Gun Violence is a misnomer. It should be criminal violence prevention. The root of the problem is many of the repeat offender criminals in the revolving door justice system. The focus should be on the rehabilitation or incarceration of the criminal. Prevent criminal behavior and all crime will be reduced.

Jerry Yuen

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 10:09:35 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marcus Tanaka	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is a waste of money. Since our gun related crimes are low, just call HPD to find out numbers. Also since all law abiding citizens cannot carry a gun outside of their home for self defense because ALL conceal carry weapons permits/open carry permits are denied, this study will only be 1 sided. It won't take into account when a gun could have been used to prevent a death, serious injury, rape, kidnapping, or sodomy outside the home.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 11:18:06 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fred Delosantos	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1541. This is another veiled attempt to now use taxpayer dollars to conduct biased studies whose only purpose is to deprive citizens of the constitutional rights. The State of Hawaii can surely use this funding for better purposes, since the legislature is always squawking about how there isn't enough money to go around, and that we need to raise taxes. Well, we sure as heck don't need this politically-biased wild goose chase to be funded by the hard working citizens of Hawaii.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 11:18:39 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Craig Kashiwai	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

February 12, 2019

Dear State Legislature,

I strongly urge this committee to support the passage of HB 1541 relating to Gun Violence Prevention. I am proud that Hawaii leads the nation in the number of gun deaths per capita, but our gun safety laws still need some work to maintain this distinction. I was very disappointed that the committee decided not to hold a hearing on the bill to close the assault weapons loophole. However, HB 1541 is a step in the right direction. It is up to the states to do what the federal government refuses to do because of the power of the gun lobby. The Gun Violence Prevention Center proposed in this bill will study, collect, collect and disseminate information on gun violence. How can we make rational decisions about any policy if we are prohibited from collecting the necessary data to inform our decision-makers?

Please support this bill, It's common sense.

Thank you.

Deborah G. Nehmad

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 11:55:36 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brandon Allen Kainoa Leong	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1541.

So the purpose of this bill is to spend millions of dollars to create a panel through the University of Hawaii to study gun violence in Hawaii and come up with ways to curb the violence. Well the current FBI crime and statistics report is the 2016 report. In Hawaii alone there were a total of 35 murders using all types of weapons. Of the 35 murders 19 were committed with any type of firearms. The 19 incidents with firearms breakdown by 12 of the firearms used were handguns, 3 were rifles and 2 were with shotguns. Hawaii has a very low gun related deaths compared to other states. Spending millions of tax payer dollars for a study where only 19 murders were committed with a firearm seems very irresponsible when we have other issues like homelessness and infrastructure problems where this money can be better spent.

FBI 2016 Crime In The US Report found at <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-us/2016/crime-in-the-us/topic-pages/tab,e/table-12>

Aloha,

Brandon Leong

Secretary and Certified NRA Instructor for Lessons In Firearms Education Hawaii (LIFE)

HRA Director At Large

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 11:39:40 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Millicent Cox	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly urge this committee to support the passage of HB1541. Hawaii leads the nation in the number of gun deaths per capita and still can benefit from strengthening gun safety laws, such as the loophole for assault weapons. However, HB1541 is a step in the right direction. The Gun Violence Prevention Center proposed in this bill will study, collect, collect and disseminate information on gun violence.

Please support this bill.

Mahalo.

Millicent Cox

Honolulu 96822

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 12:01:53 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Matt	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

while no one and especially lawful firearm owners want violence, this is just an excuse to use taxpayer funded dollars for those who oppose second amendment rights to eventually remove the ability for citizens to lawfully defend themselves and their families under the disguise of some committee of people who are afraid of firearms so don't want anyone else to have them.

there is far more violence in this state from alcohol abuse, drug abuse, cyber abuse - so why is taxpayer money being poured down this rabbit hole when it could be used to actually help areas that are already proven to cause more violence in our state?

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 1:00:47 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
ISABELLA HUGHES	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly encourage this committee to support passing HB 1541.

I was very disappointed that the committee decided not to hold a hearing on the bill to close the assault weapons loophole. For sure, HB 1541 is a step in the right direction to remedy this.

It is with great pride that our state is leading the US in terms of the number of gun deaths per capita, but our gun safety laws need to be updated and some work to maintain this spot. Hawaii needs to do what the federal government refuses to do because of the power of the gun lobby. The Gun Violence Prevention Center proposed in this bill will study, collect, collect and disseminate information on gun violence.

Please support this bill for our community.

Thank you,

Isabella Hughes

Hilo, HI

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 6:35:34 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Quentin Kealoha	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose bill HB1541 HD1.

This is a complete waste of tax payer monies on a nonexistent problem. The resources could be better utilized for actual problems facing Hawaii, such as our crumbling infrastructure.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:32:20 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
charles Ferrer	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this bill. This is just another way to get together and brainstorm and find more ways to ban guns. Why spend money on something that is not wanted or needed, especially with the economic state. There are a lot of better things that this money can be spent on.

LATE

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 8:04:10 AM
Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Soon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

So called "gun violence" here is practically non-existent.

This is a complete waste of my hard-earned tax dollars.

LATE

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 9:31:59 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Donald Denison	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

We don't need money wasted on studys that will prove what we already know. If the public is armed there's less gun violence because criminals don't want to die. They want an unarmed, easy prey.

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 10:24:20 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael A. Wee	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE this bill. It is a waste of money for a non-existent problem. Using taxpayer funds to formulate anti-gun policies and present them as government-sponsored gun control advocacy is totally unfair to everyone. Why would law-abiding gun owners be funding (if they knew) an organization that wants to curtail their Second Amendment rights? Unbelievable!

LATE

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 2:21:19 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert Hechtman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill,

Money's could be much better spent in areas of preventing individuals from committing crimes, drug rehab, improving prisons, etc...

Thank you, Robert Hechtman

LATE

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 12:22:24 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marc	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1541. This bill uses taxpayer money to establish a center at UH to conduct "studies" that are neither needed nor wanted. It is fiscally and morally irresponsible to use hard-earned taxpayer money to fund politically driven "research" to find excuses to introduce more anti-gun legislation.

LATE

HB-1541-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 2:25:20 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/13/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Doris Segal Matsunaga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TO: Rep. Chris Lee, Chair, Rep. Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair, and members of the Judiciary Committee

FR: Doris Segal Matsunaga

RE: [HB 1541, HD1](#)

I strongly urge this committee to support the passage of HB 1541. I am proud that Hawaii leads the nation in its low number of gun deaths per capita, but our gun safety laws still need some work to maintain this distinction. I was very disappointed that the committee decided not to hold a hearing on the bill to close the assault weapons loophole. However, HB 1541 is a step in the right direction. It is up to the states to do what the federal government refuses to do because of the power of the gun lobby. The Gun Violence Prevention Center proposed in this bill will study, collect, collect and disseminate information on gun violence. How can we make rational decisions about any policy if we are prohibited from collecting the necessary data to inform our decision-makers?

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Doris Segal Matsunaga

'Aiea Hawaii